(b) Docs not arise.

Involvement of Pak nationals in ammunition depot explosions in Rajasthan

1072. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that involvement of Pakistani nationals in the ammunition depot explosions in Rajasthan and having photographs of vital defence installations, besides sketches of ammunition deposits and details of troops location, has come to light recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any inquiry has been made to identify the involvement of army personnel in leaking the military secrets;

(d) if so, what is the outcome thereof; and

(e) what action has been taken by Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Report of Court of Inquiry is awaited.

(c) and (d) Investigations have revealed no involvement of any army personnel in this case.

(e) Docs not arise.

Indian Navy in need of more Aircraft Carriers

1073. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Navy needs to have atlcast three aircraft carriers in view of the changed security scenario in the region;

(b) whether any request from the Indian Navy has been received by Government for acquiring aircraft carriers;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the progress Government have made in acquiring Admiral Gorshko from Russia?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) The Indian Navy needs to have two

operational aircraft carriers. Presently, it has only one aircraft carrier namely 'INS Virat'.

2. The Government have approved the indigenous construction of an Air Defence Ship (ADS) for the Navy in 1999. In addition, an Inter-Governmental agreement (IGA) has been signed with the Government of the Russian Federation in October, 2000 for the acquisition of an Aircraft Carrier Admiral GorshkoV. The Detailed Project Document (DPD) furnished by the Russian Side on various aspects of the 'Admiral Gorshkov' Project, prior to its acquisition, has been examined. However, an investment decision on the acquisition of 'Admiral Gorshkov' has not yet been taken.

Private Participation in R&D of defence sector

1074. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is seeking private participation in R&D of defence sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what percentage of budget of the Ministry is being spent on R&D at present;

(d) whether Government have any proposal from foreign multinational companies in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) (a) and (b) Government is encouraging enhanced participation of private sector companies in Defence R&D to pool national resources. In the last decade a large number of private sector companies have come forward to participate in number of technology disciplines including electronics, engineering, microwave devices, structural systems, armament sub-systems, authomativc power packs, aerospace components, components for armoured vehicles and military equipment/stores.